STANDARD HARMONY
In Four Parts

A Set of Harmony Exercises for SMMS/RSAMD

Tom David Wilson

Set 9

Student Name……

6 x ½ hour Lessons

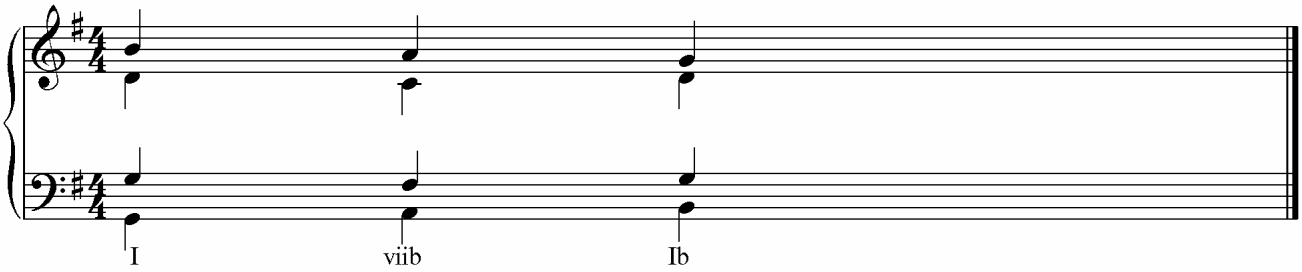
Date for Completion of Set……

Lesson 1: Use of the Passing Six-Three
Lesson 2: Use of the Circle of Fifths
Lesson 3: Use of the Chromatic Circle of Fifths
Lesson 4: Use of Secondary Dominants
Lesson 5: Class Test a)
Lesson 6: Class Test b)

1. Use of the Passing Six-Three

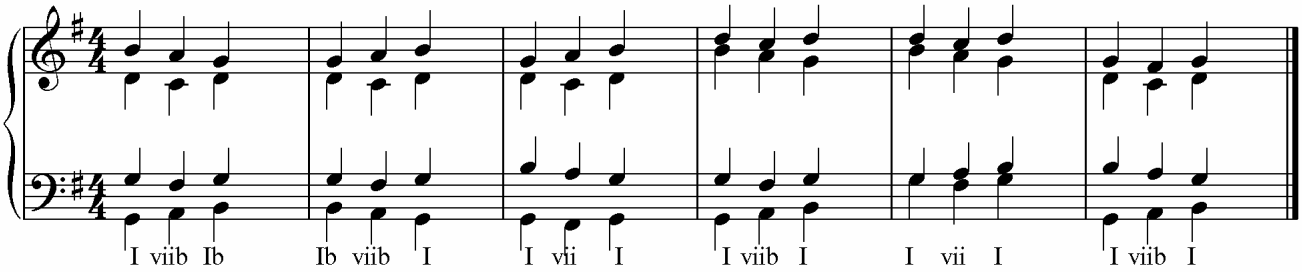
In Set 5 you learned about the Passing Six-Four. The "Passing Six-Three" is very similar but with one subtle difference; in this case both inner parts dip down by step in the following manner:

Eg 124



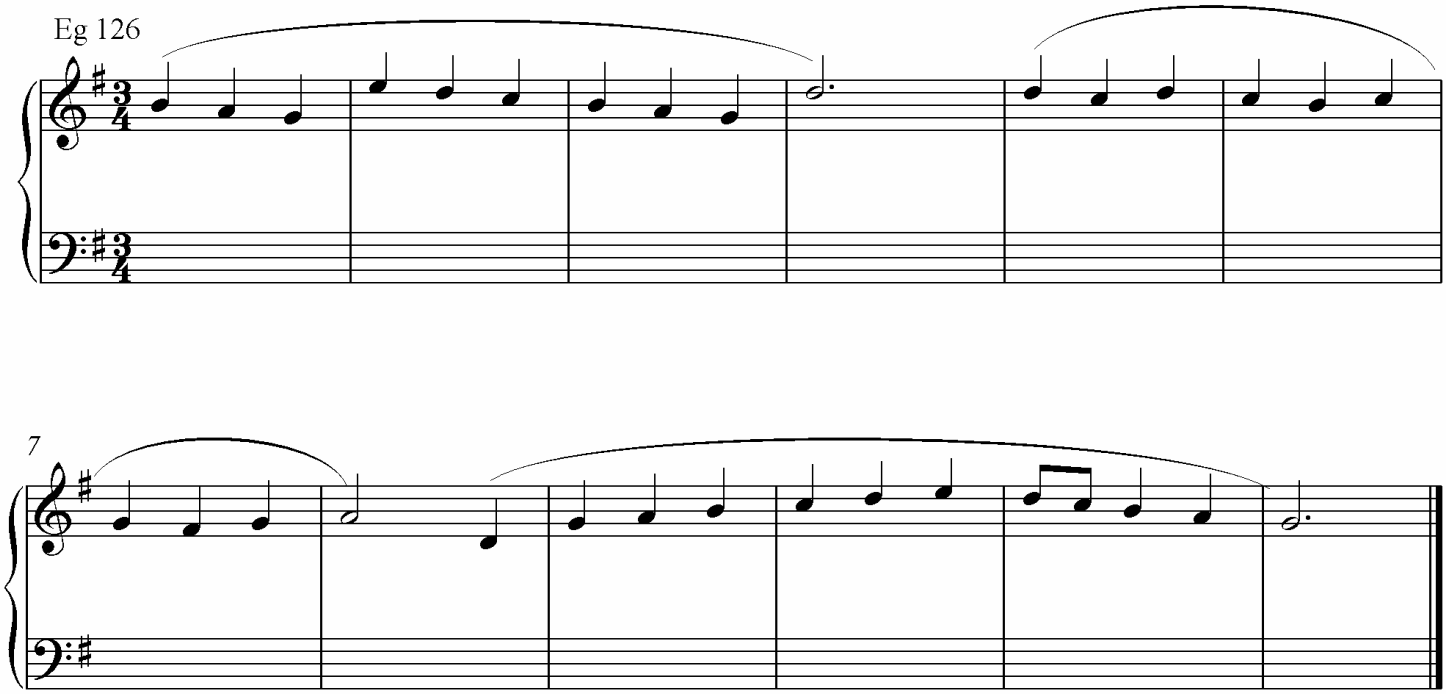
The middle chord is now Chord viib as opposed to Chord Vc, hence the name. (Six-Three is the nomenclature for first inversion in Figured Bass.) Do not be alarmed at the supposed consecutive fifths as the middle fifth is a diminished fifth and the outer fifths are perfect fifths. This progression is permissible but it does not work so easily on the Sub-Dominant because of this propensity for consecutives and is best left for the Tonic.
It has a richer sound than the Passing Six-Four and its use would be indicative of the student's wide harmonic technique. Furthermore, this progression, and its sister the Passing Six-Four, can be used with any part taking any line. Consider these various versions:

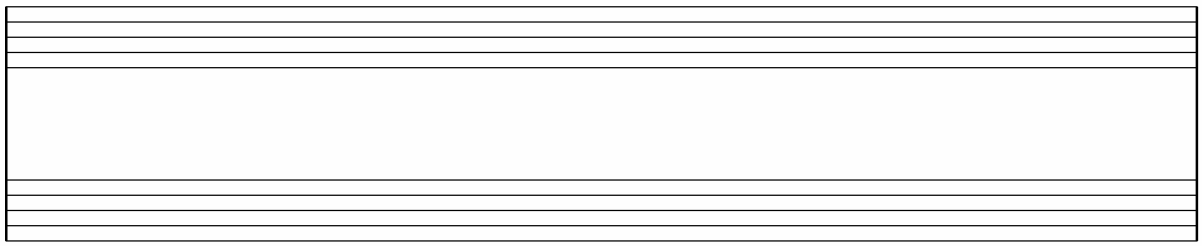
Eg 125

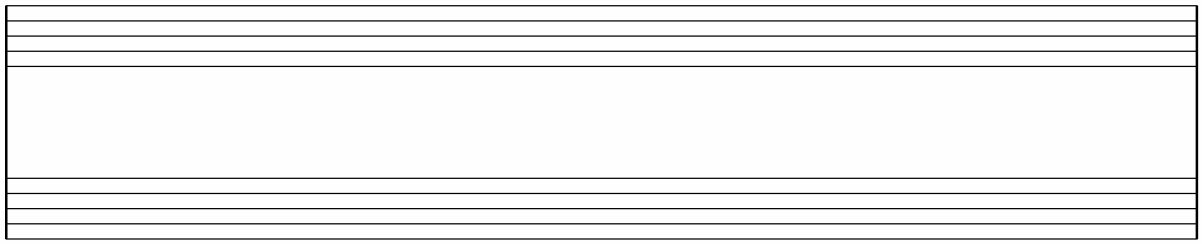


Now harmonise the following using as many versions of the Passing Six-Three and Passing Six Four as you can.

Eg 126





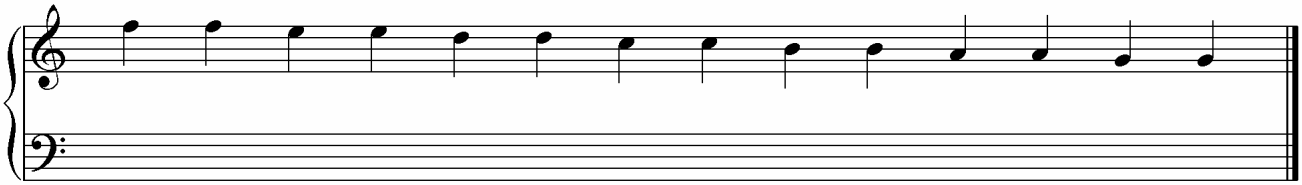


2. Use of the Circle of Fifths

The “Circle of Fifths” is a very strong progression, being a series of R^4 progressions (see Set 1). Its strength has lead to its ubiquity throughout a wide rang of styles and aesthetics. If you can apply it successfully you will be assured of a good passage of harmony of great strength.

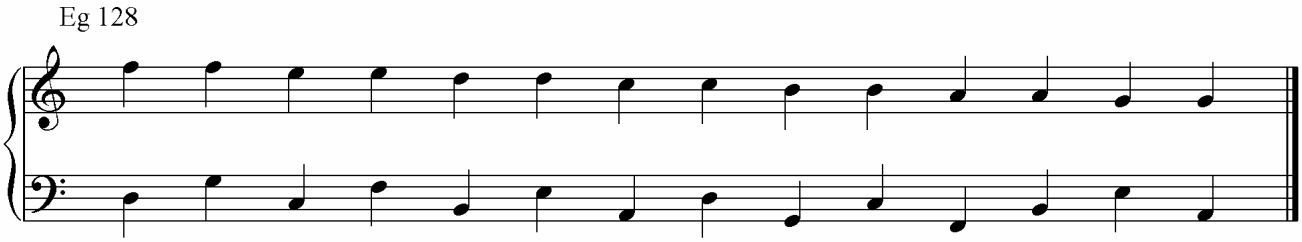
You will need to look for a series of repeated notes in the Soprano:

Eg 127



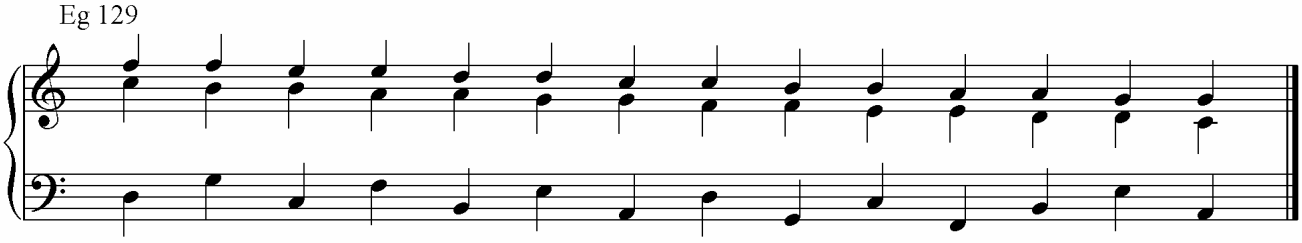
Each note in the Soprano will become, alternately the Third and the Seventh of the chord thus:

Eg 128



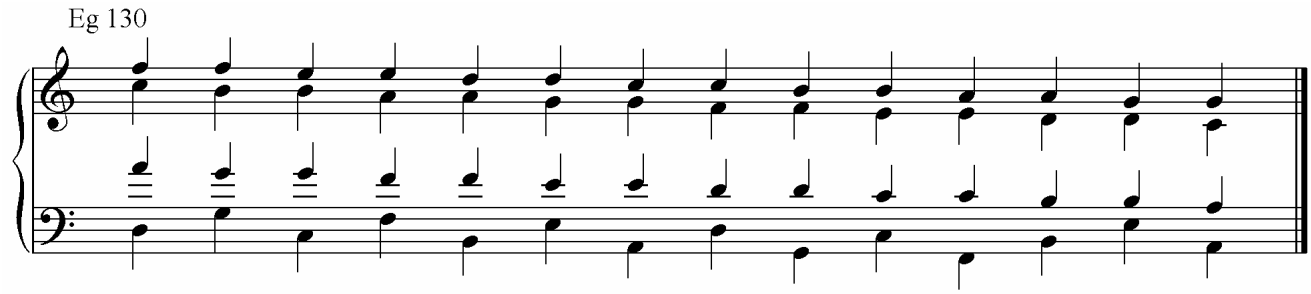
The Alto will do the same as the Soprano but in phase so that it will sound the Third when the Soprano has the Seventh and will sound the Seventh when the Soprano has the Third:

Eg 129



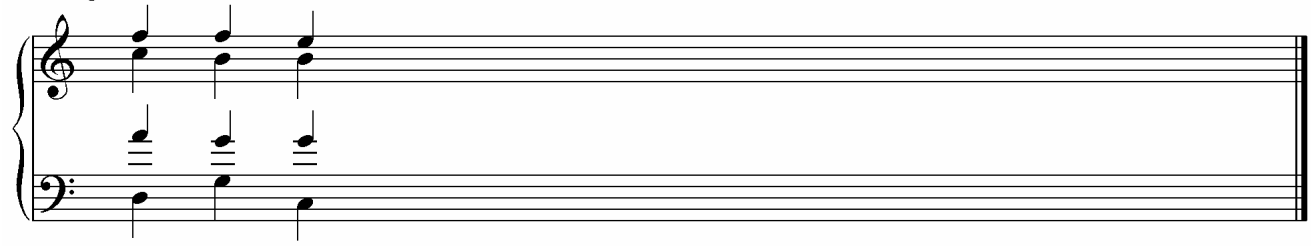
You will notice also that the Alto falls when the Soprano repeats its note and the Alto repeats its note as the Soprano falls. For the Tenor you must be carful not to produce consecutive fifths with the Bass so an easy method for generating its line is to place it a third under the Alto describing a similar line:

Eg 130



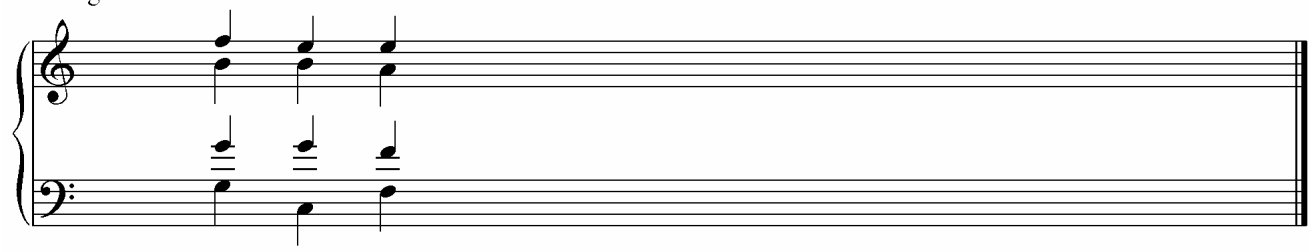
For Eg 127 to Eg 130 you will notice that there are no key signatures or time signatures. This is because this progression will work on any beat and, to a certain extent, the sense of Tonic is suspended during its progress. For this reason it has often been used as an aid to modulation and in classical development sections of sonata movements. This is also the reason why these examples have not been figured with Roman Numerals.
Of course you will not find a pattern in the Soprano as extensive as these examples but you are likely to find small sections of this pattern like this:

Eg 131



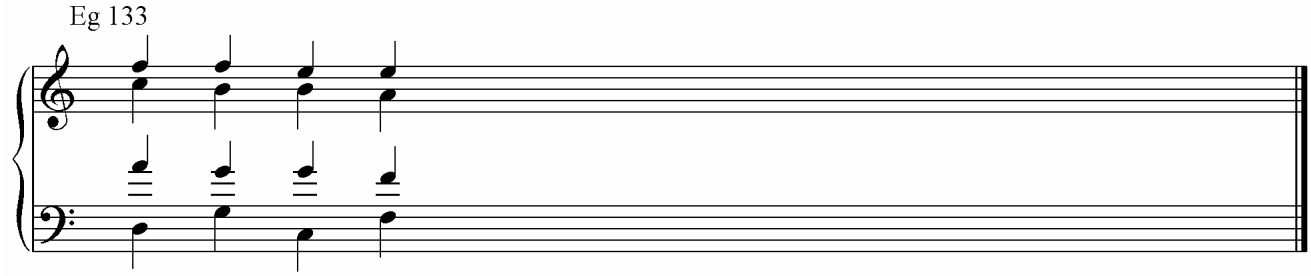
Or this:

Eg 132



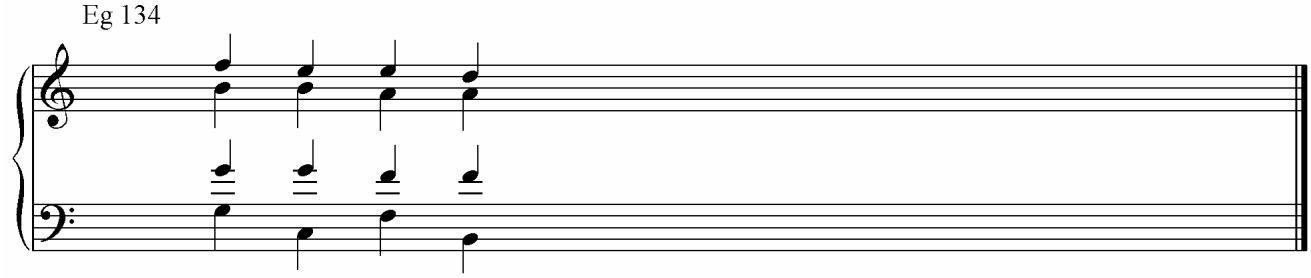
Or this:

Eg 133



Or this:

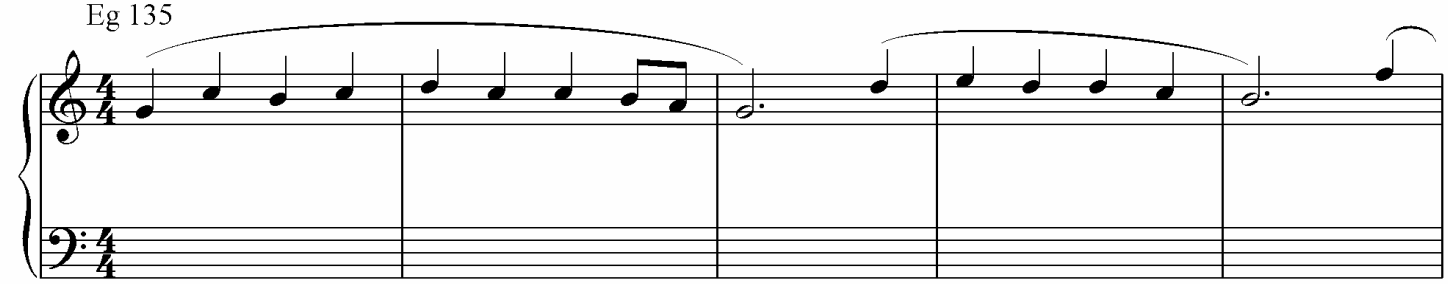
Eg 134

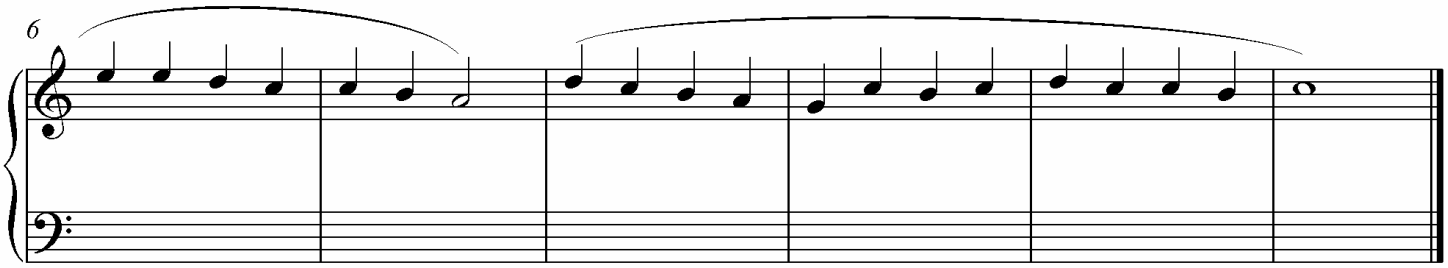


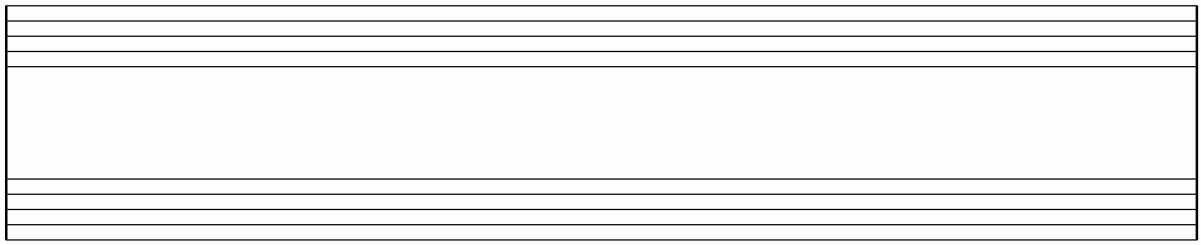
Because each of these chords is a Seventh, they can be used in any inversion. This means that any voice can sound any line but before you try interchanging these lines you would do well to practise the above configuration many times until you are fully familiar with it.

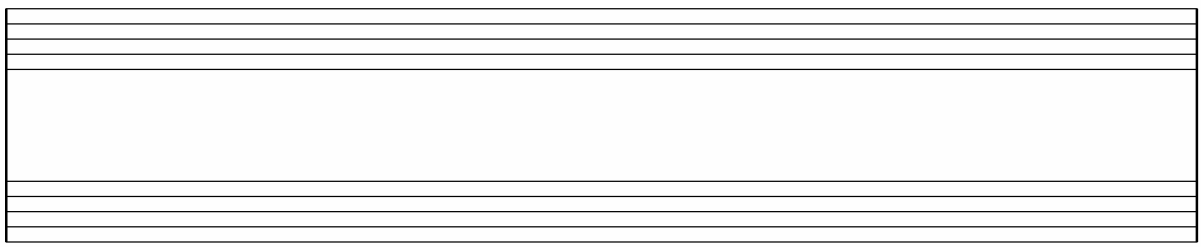
Harmonise the following incorporating as many examples of the Circle of Fifths as you can.

Eg 135





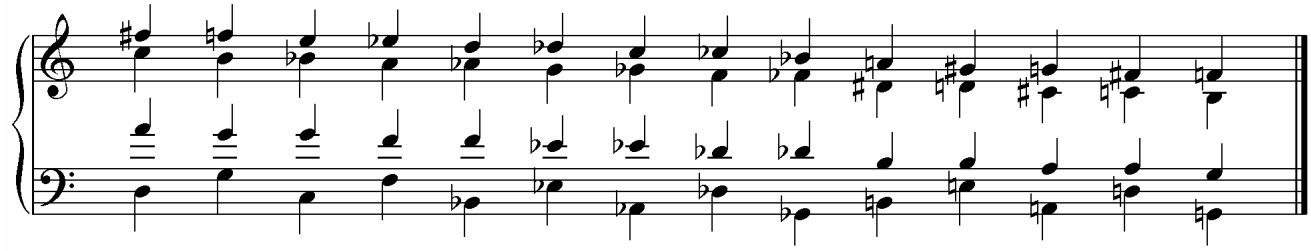




3. Use of the Chromatic Circle of Fifths

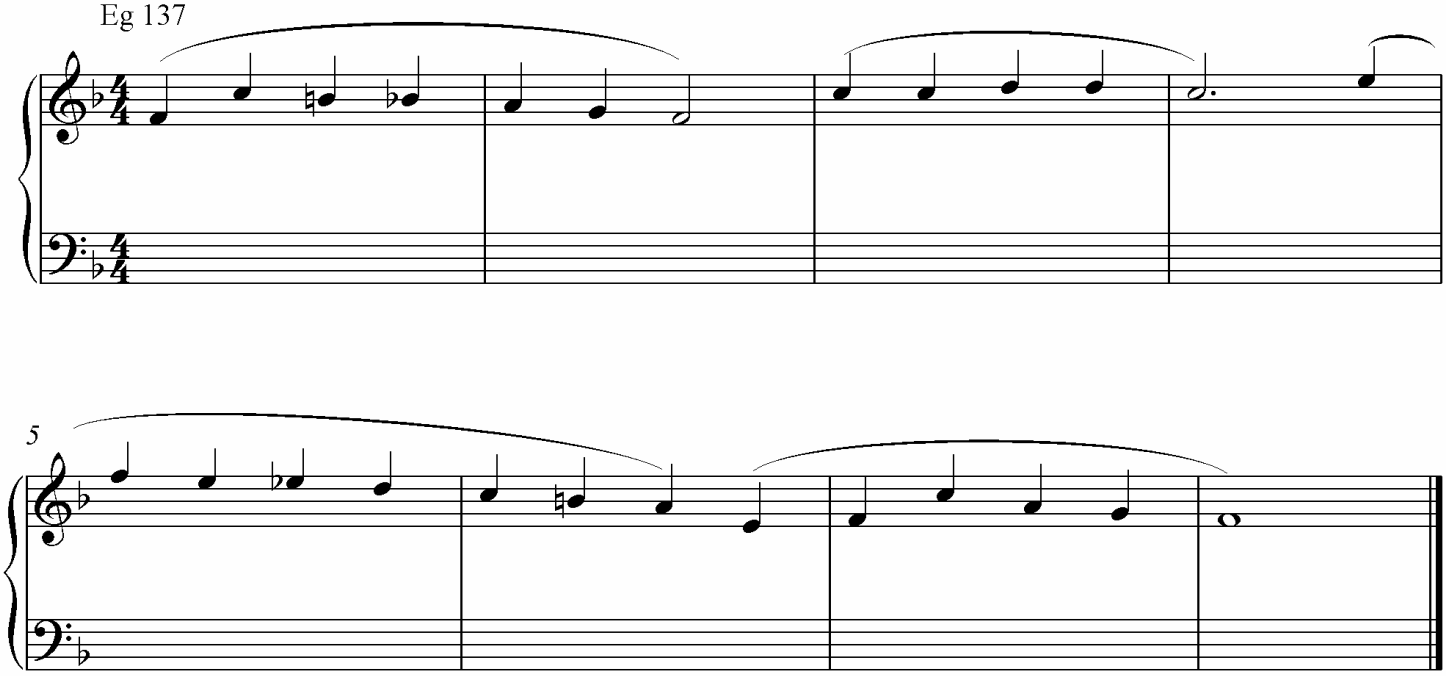
From time to time the Soprano line may describe a short, descending chromatic scale. Such moments can be very difficult to harmonise but a chromatic adjustment to the Circle of Fifths provides a very strong solution:

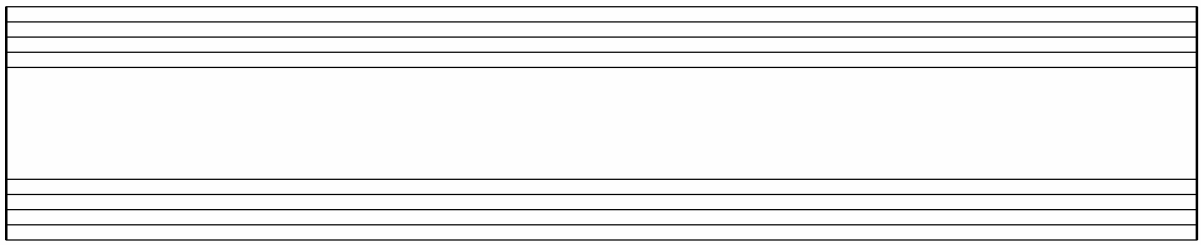
Eg 136

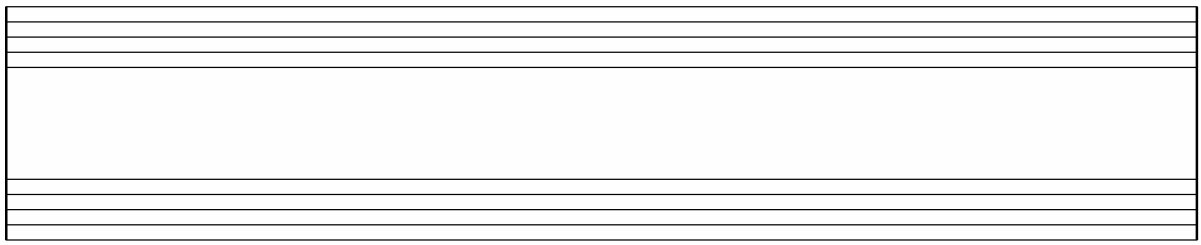


However, great care must be taken over the correct spelling of the enharmonics and it works best if the Sevenths are all minor sevenths. Mozart was very fond of this progression and you will find good examples of it in his 40th and 41st Symphonies.

Harmonise the following, incorporating some Chromatic Circle of Fifths progressions.


Eg 137
5

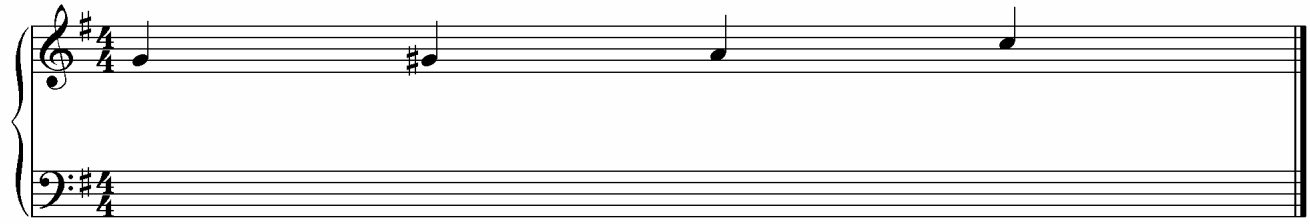




4. Use of Secondary Dominants

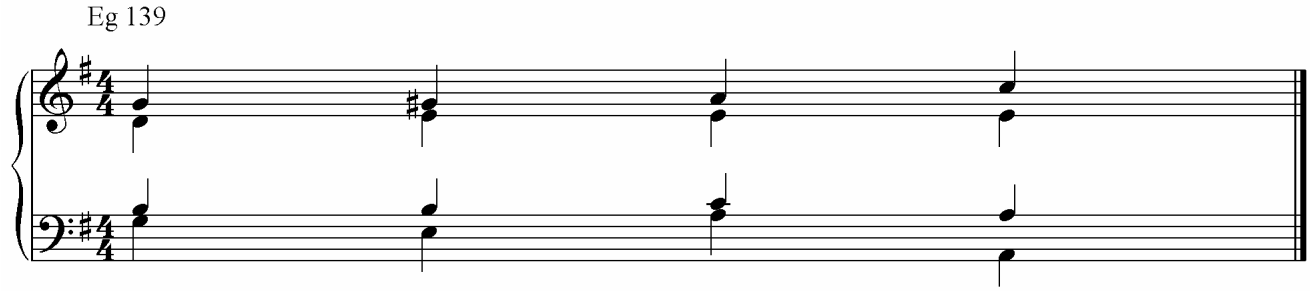
It is unfortunate that the Circle of Fifths and especially the Chromatic Circle of Fifths does not work so well in reverse, a Circle of Fourths if you will. This leaves us with the problem of how to harmonise patterns of ascending chromatic notes in the Soprano:

Eg 138



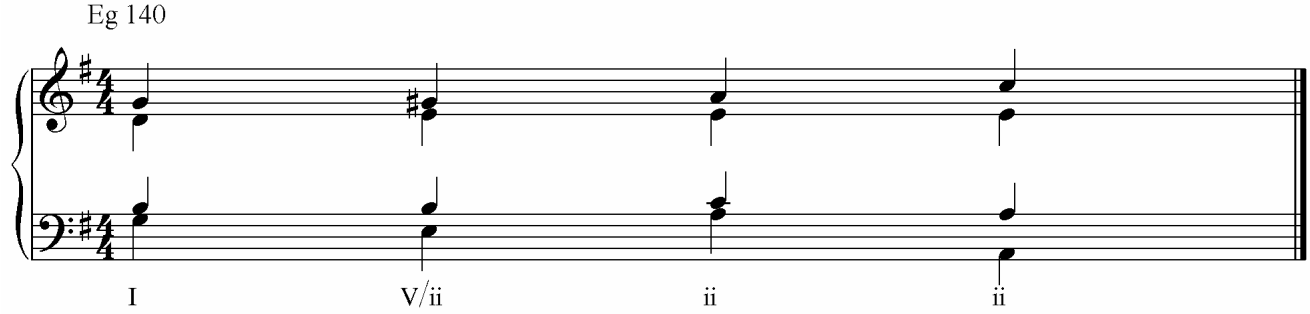
A good solution is to treat the G sharp as a leading note in a V-I progression out-with the Tonic:

Eg 139



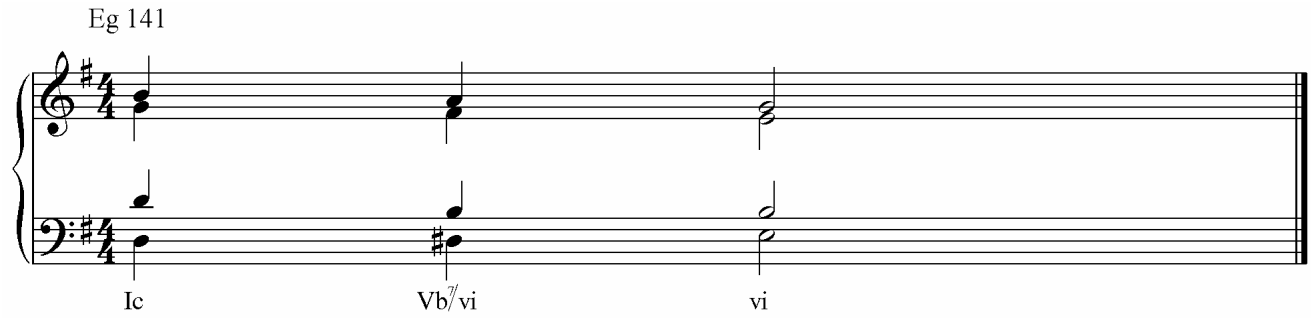
In this case the Chord ii on the third beat has been preceded by its own Chord V. The figuration would be as follows:

Eg 140



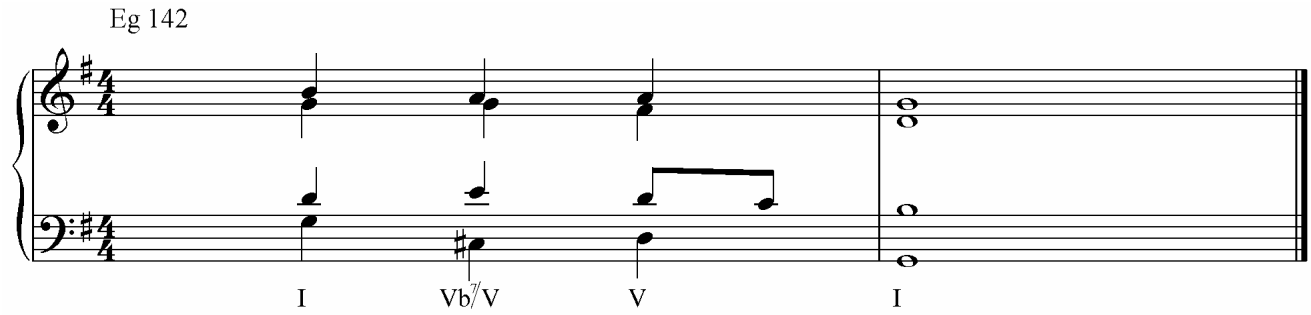
So the second chord is described as Chord V of Chord ii or V/ii. (This can prove to be rather confusing and it would be worth your while to take your time, discus it with your teacher and grasp fully this idea.)
Any chord can be strengthened by preceding it with its own dominant in this way and it is applicable in many situations not just a rising chromatic figure in the Soprano. These strengthening chords are called “Secondary Dominants” and they give us a name for the chromatically adjusted cadences described in Set 8:

Eg 141



And:

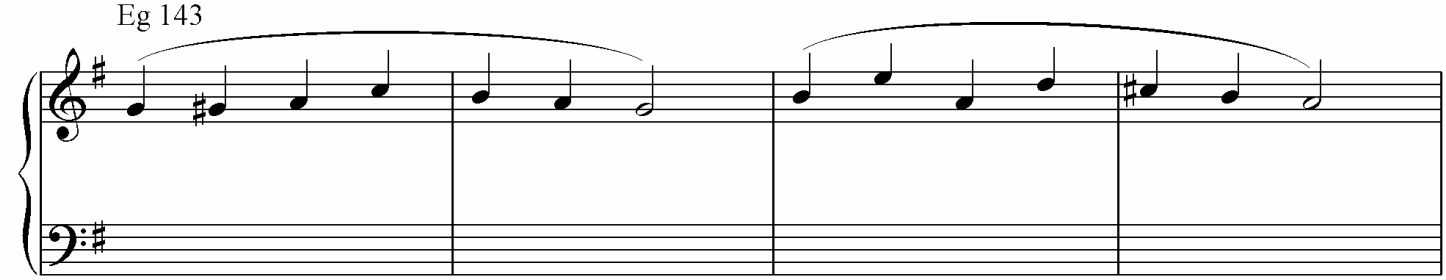
Eg 142

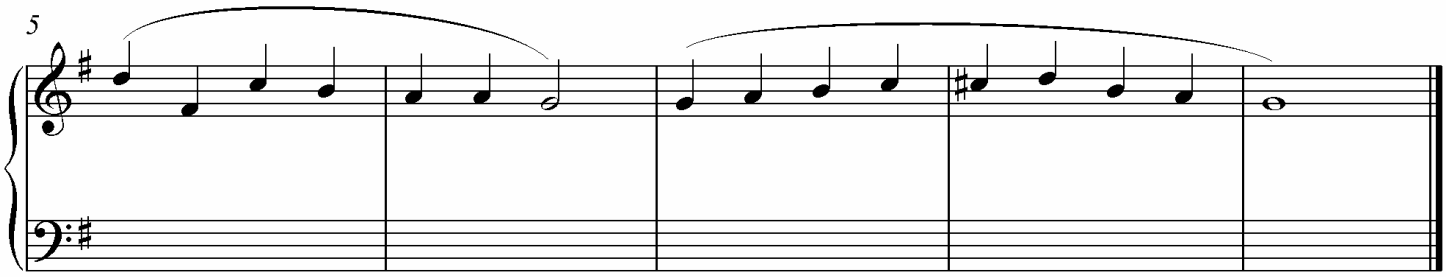


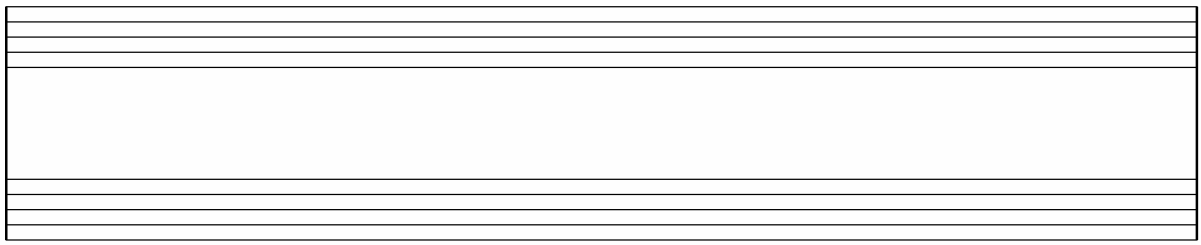
Secondary Dominants, Chromatic Adjustments to Cadences, Stock Progressions and Chromatic Passing Notes are all closely related. Their differences are subtle and largely depend on their context. You will want to use these devices extensively if your harmony is to be unencumbered and expressive. It will help you also to appreciate their use by the composers of the music you play.

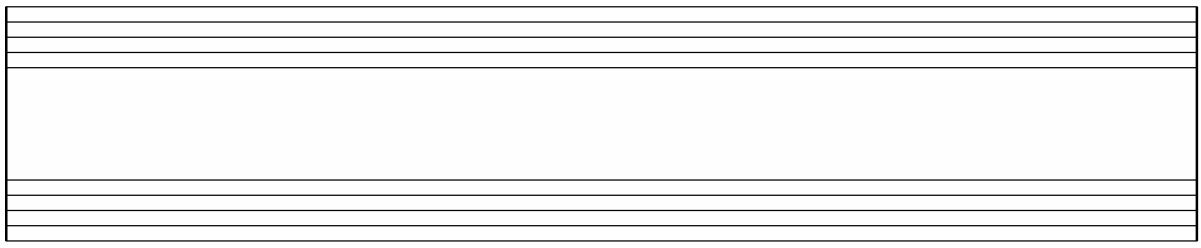
Harmonise the following and try to incorporate as many Secondary Dominants as you can:

Eg 143



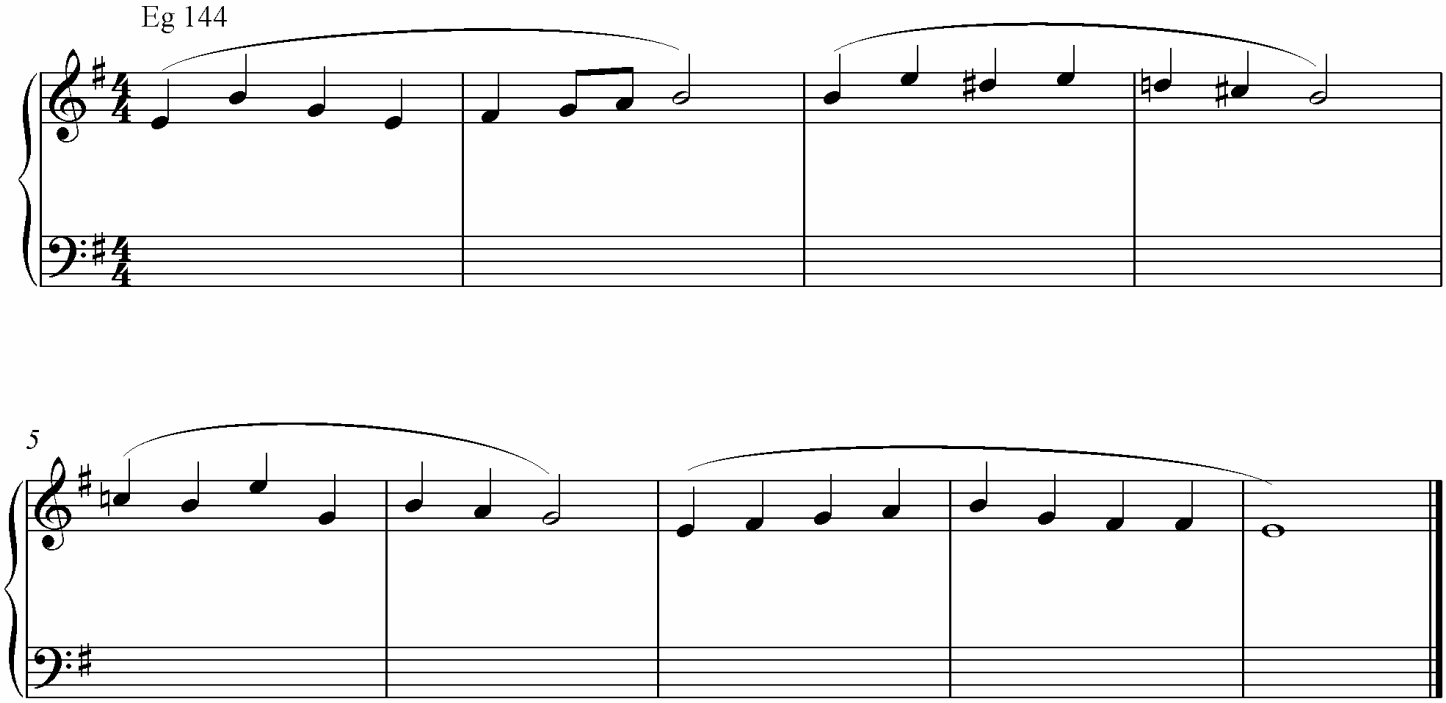


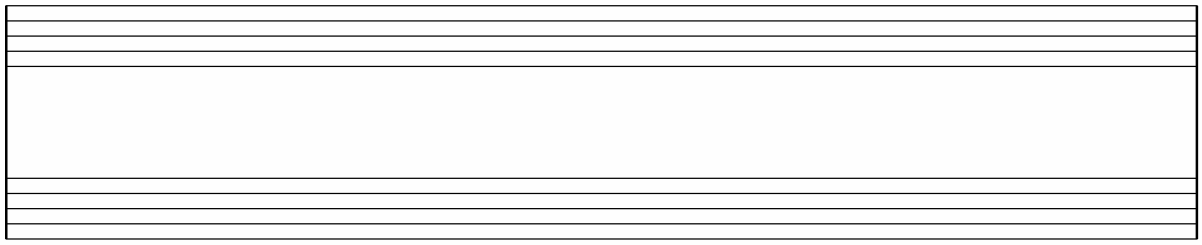


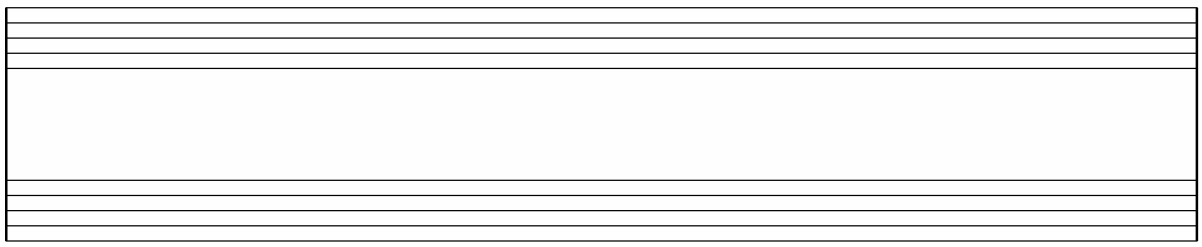


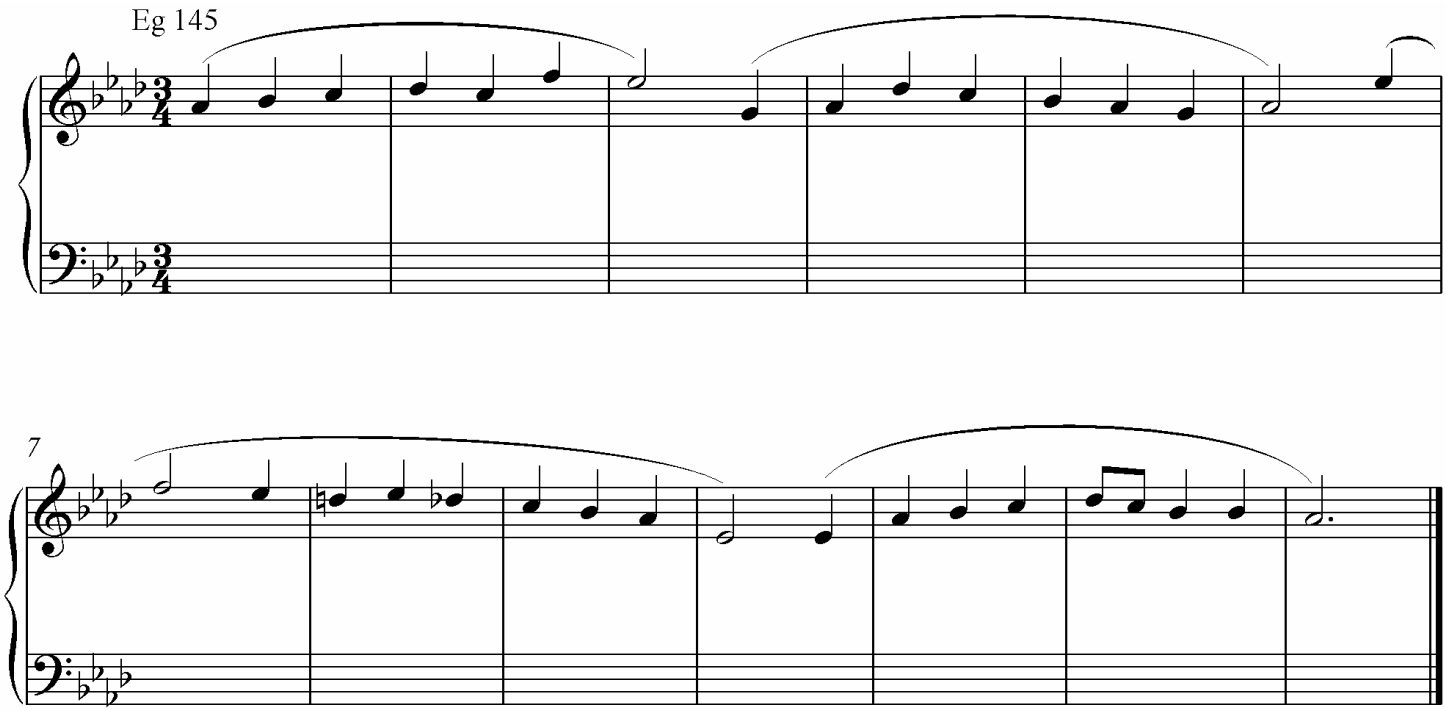
5. Class Test a)

Harmonise the following:







6. Class Test b)

Harmonise the following: